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Austin, Texas
TEXAS.

BY
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"Kemper County Vindicated," "The Bench and Bar of Mississippi."*

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'Tis not in mortals to command success, but
We'll do more, Sempronius, we'll deserve it.

—ADDISON'S CATO.

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A. T. WATTS.

Arthur Thomas Watts, one of the judges of the Court of Commission of Appeals, was born in Covington County, Mississippi, on the 31st of August, 1837. His parents were natives of Georgia, but settled in Mississippi prior to the organization of the State government, and in 1841 removed to Texas and located in Polk County. Arthur received his education at Zion Seminary in Mississippi, and read law under the supervision of Hon. John E. McNair, a prominent judge of that State. He afterwards joined his father's family in Texas, and was admitted to the bar in Polk County in 1859, when he began the practice of his profession; but when the war began in 1861, he returned to Mississippi and enlisted in the Sixteenth Mississippi Regiment, in which he served as a private during the entire continuance of hostilities, in the Army of Northern Virginia. He was with Stonewall Jackson during his celebrated campaign in the valley, and shared in all its glorious victories. He was wounded at the second battle of Manassas, and again at Spottsylvania Court-house, on the 12th of May, 1864.

At the close of the war he returned to Texas and resumed the practice of law. The result of the war had swept away his means, and he found himself in necessitous circumstances; but his energy and determination overcame the difficulties which surrounded him, and success crowned his professional efforts. He was a young man of great personal popularity, and his ability being promptly recognized, he soon obtained a large portion of the practice in his judicial district.

In 1872 he was elected a member of the Thirteenth Legislature, and participated vigorously in the summary

repeal of the obnoxious laws which had been fastened upon the people of Texas by the corrupt and oppressive policy of Radical rule, and in the new legislation necessary to restore their liberty to the people and place the State in its former orbit of freedom and prosperity. He deserved particular credit for his part in effecting an arrangement with the Texas and Pacific Railroad, by which land grants were substituted for the enormous debt due by the State to that corporation, and thereby relieving the people from an intolerable burden of taxation.

In 1874 he removed to Weatherford, where he enjoyed a fine practice, but, in 1878, sought brighter prospects in Dallas, where he had many friends and a more ample field. In 1880 he was appointed one of the judges of the Court of Commission of Appeals, which position he still holds and adorns by his energy, ability and devotion to its duties.